



Montana Stockgrowers Association

Serving Montana's Cattle Industry Since 1884

420 N. California
Helena, MT 59601
Phone: 406/442-3420
Fax: 406/449-5105
www.mtbeef.org

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February 1, 2011

Brian Gion
Montana Cooperative Development Center
PO Box 3027
Great Falls, MT 59403

Dear Brian:

I write this letter on behalf of the Montana Stockgrowers Association in support of the mission and the efforts to the Montana Cooperative Development Center (MCDC).

Being the only statewide center, the Montana Cooperative Development Center is vital to the economic future of Montana and has proven its ability to assist in the development of businesses using the cooperative business model. The MCDC has a proven track record of success and has excelled as it has built the capacity to accomplish great things. MCDC has helped in the development and formation of 40 cooperatives in the past 7 years. By providing assistance to over 127 entities, the MCDC has proven that their services are critical for continued community development and is an entrepreneurial essential component for success in communities across the State as we work together to strengthen Montana's economy.

The Montana Cooperative Development Center has demonstrated the ability to address the needs of rural Montana and the agriculture community. The establishment of cooperatives has proven to maintain and create local jobs in our rural communities. At a time when jobs are so important to all Montanans, the MDC can proudly say that they have assisted in creating or retaining 442 FTE jobs through support for existing cooperatives or the creation of new cooperatives.

The Montana Stockgrowers Association strongly supports the Montana Cooperative Development Center's statewide efforts, servicing all 56 counties and 7 Indian reservations, to improve Montana's rural economy.

I wish you continued success in your efforts.

Sincerely,

Errol Rice
Executive Vice President
Montana Stockgrowers Association

EXHIBIT 6

DATE Feb 4, 2011

HB 316